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METRO REPORTER GROUP (VAC)
Published Monday - Circulation 79,650
San Francisco Metro (14,741)
Peninsula Metro (12,547)
Berkeley Metro (8,395)
Oakland Metro (22,373)
Richmond Metro (9,021)
Vallejo Metro (4,182)
San Joaquin Metro (7,088)
TOTAL 78,353

THE SUN REPORTER (ABC)
Published Thursday
Circulation 9,422

THE CALIFORNIA VOICE (VAC)
(The Weekender)
Published Saturday
Circulation 25,500

President Jimmy Carter
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

President Carter:

I am writing as co-founder and managing editor of the Sun-Reporter newspaper in San Francisco, the leading paper of the black community, and as a long time supporter of Rev. Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple Christian Church, of the Disciples of Christ Denomination.

I have found Rev. Jones and his church to follow the precepts of Jesus Christ more diligently than does any other group that professes to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. He has practiced and preached a philosophy of loving thy brother for many years.

Rev. Jones is in Guyana presently, heading a remarkable project which reminds one of the pioneers of earlier days, particularly in the U.S., who paved the unknown to carve out homes in uninhabited areas. The project, which impressively sustains close to 1500 people at this time, has drawn acclaim from religious, secular and governmental leaders.

The past year has brought constant attack by legal and non-legal means, at the instigation of former members of the church who apparently unable to cope with the responsibilities of being their brother's keeper, have turned to cruelly avenge a standard they could neither encompass nor disregard.

I have been dismayed to learn in recent weeks that the relentless campaign to reverse Jonestown's phenomenal success has taken a new and ugly turn. Whereas the opponents of Jim Jones have been unable to reach his work by opening their minds, they are attempting to physically force the doors of Jonestown open to persons who have vowed they would destroy the newly-settled land, if not by the power of the pen, or the persecution of lawmakers, then by violence and force.

Many distributing incidents confirm this. Kathy Hunter, a Ukiah California journalist who insisted upon visiting Jonestown only to adamantly refuse the welcome she was offered, is the key to a whole new wave of defamatory attempts. Now unable to produce any facts which could confirm fiction about Jonestown life, the proud young nation of Guyana is itself being dragged to an avowed slaughter of your administrative policies in the Caribbean. Any and every justification is being promulgated to interfere with the affairs of that sovereign nation, to make Jonestown the victim and Guyana the hostage host.

It is clear that the participation of our government only adds fuel to the destructive impetus that has already taken the form of threats of mercenaries and every type of chicanery and design. As the attempts escalate to draw internation attention to the scene, the U.S. government itself faces the volatile choice of supporting its ambassadors of goodwill abroad, or supporting one of the cruelest attempts of our time to impede the progress of these missionaries of goodwill.

Government agencies investigating Rev. Jones and the Peoples Temple should cease to do so. If all the churches of this nation shared but a small portion of the goodwill, honesty and concern for the public welfare that the Peoples Temples has, we would be a nation of such honest, law abiding christians that the very agencies that are used to persecute Rev. Jones would become extraneous to the public good.

Moreover, I fear that this persecution, with its strong political overtones would also be politically unwise. I would recommend that rather than acceding to the cruel injustice of harassing Rev. Jones, government should turn its full attention to uncovering and dismantling the web of conspiracy that has made this persecution possible. In that effort, government, church, and the law alike would prosper and you would show yourself in great measure, to be a guardian of the peace.

Very truly yours,

Tom Flemming

Tom Flemming, Managing
Editor, San Francisco
Sun-Reporter

TF:vly

cc: Secretary of State Cyrus Vance
Frank Tumminia,
Jerome Kurtz, Commissioner IRS
Richard Wiley, Commissioner, FCC
Joseph Califano, HEW

Thomas Flemming, Managing Editor
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